ANNUAL X-MEN RED

001

MARVEL

TAYLOR
ALIXE
SOTOMAYOR

RATED **T+**

"I WAS THE PHOENIX.

"I BURNED SO BRIGHTLY.

"AND THEN I WAS DEAD.

"AND EVERYTHING WAS DARK."

I'M ALIVE AGAIN.

BUT I NEED YOU TO UNDERSTAND, I'M NOT CONTENT TO RETURN TO THE ***SAME*** LIFE.

I REFUSE TO ACCEPT THIS WORLD FOR HOW IT IS.

I'M GOING TO CHANGE IT.

ANNUAL #1

JEAN GREY NIGHTCRAWLER TRINARY WOLVERINE HONEY BADGER

X-MEN RED

LIKE A PHOENIX RISING FROM THE ASHES, JEAN GREY HAS RETURNED TO LIFE. AND WHILE THE WORLD JEAN HAS RETURNED TO IS VASTLY DIFFERENT FROM THE ONE SHE LEFT, ONE CONSTANT REMAINS: X-MEN STILL PROTECT A WORLD THAT HATES AND FEARS THEM.

JEAN HAS A LOT OF CATCHING UP TO DO WITH THE WORLD, BUT MORE IMPORTANTLY, WITH THE PEOPLE SHE LOVES. WHILE MANY OF HER FAMILY AND FRIENDS ARE GONE, SHE SEEKS TO RECONNECT WITH THOSE WHO REMAIN...

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I SENT THE PHOENIX AWAY.

GOODBYE, JEAN GREY.

GOODBYE.

AFTERWARDS, I WAS SURROUNDED BY SO MANY PEOPLE I LOVED.

AND THEY WERE AFRAID.

I COULD FEEL IT.

BUT THEY WEREN'T AFRAID OF ME.

THEY WERE AFRAID IF THEY TOUCHED ME, I MIGHT BREAK. OR MAYBE JUST FADE AWAY.

THEY WERE AFRAID...

...FOR ABOUT TEN SECONDS.

JEAN!

HANK. IF YOU DON'T LET ME IN THERE, I WILL PHASE RIGHT THROUGH YOU.

IT'S HARD TO DESCRIBE WHAT HAPPENED NEXT.

IT WAS LIKE A WAKE IN REVERSE.

AND IT WAS OVERWHELMING.

I'D MISSED SO MUCH. THERE WAS SO MUCH TO SHARE.

THEIR JOY.

THEIR SHAME.

AND PRIDE.

THEY TOLD ME OF THE BATTLES THEY'D FOUGHT, NOT JUST STRUGGLES FOR EARTH, BUT AGAINST EACH OTHER.

THEY SPOKE ABOUT THESE DESTRUCTIVE DIVISIONS.

BUT, TO ME, IT SOUNDED LIKE PETTY SQUABBLING.

HEROES AGAINST HEROES. WITH REGULAR PEOPLE TERRIFIED OF BOTH SIDES.

WE NEED TO DO BETTER. BE BETTER.

I CELEBRATED AS I HEARD ABOUT GREAT TRIUMPHS FOR THE FIRST TIME.

KITTY PHASED A PLANET-KILLING GIANT BULLET THROUGH THE EARTH.

CAN'T BELIEVE I MISSED THAT.

AND EVERY TIME I LEARNED ABOUT SOMEONE ELSE WHO WAS GONE...

...I GRIEVED.

THERE WERE OLD FACES THAT WERE CHANGED...

AND THEN...

...THERE WAS A FAMILIAR FACE, WITH A COMPLETELY FOREIGN MIND.

YOU'RE FROM... SOMEWHERE ELSE.

YES.

YOU'RE NOT HIM.

NO.

AND YOU'RE NOT HER.

WHAT DO WE DO NOW?

I GUESS WE COULD START WITH INTRODUCTIONS.

I'M LOGAN. JUST NOT YOURS.

I'M JEAN.

I WAS NEVER YOURS.

JEAN?

KURT?

YOU LOOK LIKE YOU COULD DO WITH A BREAK.

WOULD YOU LIKE TO GO?

YES, PLEASE.

AND THEN...

BAMF

WE CROSSED A COUNTRY...

...AND I WAS HOME.

THE XAVIER INSTITUTE.

KURT SAID IT WAS NAMED AFTER ME FOR A WHILE. THE JEAN GREY INSTITUTE FOR HIGHER LEARNING.

I'VE DONE SO MUCH. I'VE SCREAMED THROUGH SPACE AS A DESTRUCTIVE ENTITY.

BUT HAVING A BUILDING--*THAT* BUILDING--NAMED AFTER ME STILL FEELS BIG. DOES THAT MAKE SENSE?

IT'S IN CENTRAL PARK NOW.

I THOUGHT IT WAS AMAZING. WE USED TO HIDE, AND HERE WE WERE OUT IN THE OPEN. IT FELT LIKE EVERYTHING HAD CHANGED SO MUCH WHILE I WAS GONE.

AND MAYBE IT HAD. MAYBE SOCIETY WAS ON A PATH TO CHANGE. TO ACCEPTANCE.

BUT SOMETHING HATEFUL HAD BEEN GROWING.

AND EMBOLDENED MORE HATRED AROUND IT.

@#$% %$#@#$% MUTANT!

HMMM.
THAT'S A THING.
I THINK THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN A HOT DOG USED AS A PROJECTILE WEAPON.
MAYBE WE SHOULD PROGRAM HOT DOGS INTO THE DANGER ROOM?
HRMPH
TASTES LIKE MUSTARD AND BIGOTRY.

HEY!

KEEP YOUR MONSTER FRIEND AWAY FROM US.

MY "MONSTER FRIEND"?

HIS NAME IS KURT. ALONGSIDE OTHERS, HE HAS SAVED THIS CITY, AND HE HAS SAVED THIS WORLD.

YOU WOULD NOT BE STANDING HERE WITHOUT HIM.

AND EVEN IF THAT WEREN'T TRUE, HE IS STILL ONE OF THE MOST BEAUTIFUL SOULS ON THIS OR ANY OTHER PLANET I'VE VISITED.

YOU, HOWEVER, CHAD TOWNSEND... YOU...

JEAN...?

IT'S OKAY.

CHAD. I'M HAVING...A PRETTY BIG DAY.

YOU COULD NOT HAVE PICKED A WORSE TIME TO COME AT ME AND MY FRIENDS WITH A BUN FULL OF PROCESSED MEAT AND INTOLERANCE.

I COULD HUMILIATE YOU, CHAD. I COULD LET ALL THESE PEOPLE KNOW WHAT YOU DO WITH YOUR TIME.

I COULD LET THEM KNOW ABOUT THE BILE YOU WRITE TO STRANGERS FROM THE ANONYMITY AND SAFETY OF YOUR ROOM.

BUT I CAN FEEL THAT YOU'RE SCARED. YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND HALF THE THINGS YOU PROFESS TO HATE.

YOU'RE WORRIED YOU *ARE* WHAT YOU HATE. AND IT DISGUSTS YOU, AND YOU END UP DISGUSTED WITH YOURSELF.

THAT'S AN ALL-TOO-COMMON VICIOUS CYCLE.

CHAD. YOUR PARENTS ARE IDIOTS. STOP LISTENING TO THEM.

IGNORANCE IS NEVER AN EXCUSE FOR HATRED.

GO HOME. LEARN SOMETHING.

ALL OF YOU...

...GET BACK TO YOUR LIVES.

YOU KNOW, *SHE'S* IN THERE.

ARE YOU A MIND READER NOW, KURT?

JUST INTUITIVE.

WOULD YOU LIKE ME WITH YOU?

I *WOULD* LIKE YOU WITH ME. BUT I SHOULD DO THIS ALONE.

IT'S NEVER EASY FOR US, IS IT?

RACHEL.

THERE'S NO PREPARING FOR THIS.

I FELT YOU COMING.

I KNOW.

WHAT DO YOU SAY TO YOUR DAUGHTER BORN IN ANOTHER TIMELINE? A WOMAN YOU BARELY KNOW?

I DON'T KNOW WHERE TO START. OR WHERE I'LL END OR... THERE'S TOO MUCH TO SAY.

THEN DON'T.

THE ANSWER IS NOTHING.

YOU AND I...WE DON'T NEED TO TALK.

JUST... LOWER YOUR DEFENSES.

AND SO WE FLEW.

NOT BECAUSE WE HAD TO. THERE WAS NO EMERGENCY. NO CATACLYSM NEEDING THE X-MEN'S INTERVENTION.

WE DIDN'T FLY BECAUSE THE DAY NEEDED SAVING SOMEWHERE.

WE FLEW BECAUSE WE COULD.

BECAUSE WE WERE FREE. AND BECAUSE WE WERE ALIVE TOGETHER. IN THE SAME TIMELINE. AT THE SAME TIME.

OUR MINDS DRIFTED TOGETHER UP THERE.

AND ALL THE COMPLICATED THINGS THAT WOULD HAVE BEEN DIFFICULT OR CLUMSY TO SAY JUST...SORTED THEMSELVES OUT.

THERE'S SOMEONE ELSE I NEED TO SEE. A CHILD I HAVEN'T MET.

CAN YOU TAKE ME?

REALLY? YOU WANT TO MEET HER?

WHY?

BECAUSE...

"...SHE'S LOGAN'S."

WOULD IT HAVE KILLED YOU TO CALL AHEAD, RACHEL?

CAN I COME IN?

I DON'T MIND YOU COMING INTO MY HOME, BUT COULD I ASK YOU TO STAY OUT OF MY HEAD?

THAT'S MORE THAN FAIR.

WHY ARE YOU HERE?

BECAUSE, LAURA...

...I DON'T HAVE MUCH FAMILY LEFT.

YOU AND RACHEL ARE CONNECTIONS TO PEOPLE IMPORTANT TO ME.

YOU--

OH MY GOD!

FREAKING JEAN GREY IS ALIVE AND SITTING ON OUR COUCH!

I'M SORRY. I DIDN'T KNOW. I WOULD HAVE CLEANED MY ROOM. OR BOUGHT A RED CARPET FOR YOUR ENTRANCE.

I CAN'T BELIEVE YOU HAD TO WALK IN HERE LIKE A REGULAR WALKING PERSON.

HELLO, GABBY.

YOU GOT MY NAME FROM MY MIND, RIGHT?

YES.

THAT'S AWESOME. WHAT NUMBER AM I THINKING OF?

GABBY. JEAN IS A FOUNDING MEMBER OF THE X-MEN AND AN OMEGA-LEVEL TELEPATH. YOU DON'T ASK HER TO DO PARTY TRICKS FOR--

SEVEN AND A HALF.

AMAZING!

I PUT THE HALF IN TO THROW YOU.

I KNOW.

OF COURSE YOU DO.

HMMM.
YOU'RE LEAVING?
I... YES.
I JUST FELT SOMEONE. HERE IN NEW YORK. SOMEONE... UNEXPECTED.
WELL, THAT'S CRYPTIC.
I NEED TO... ACTUALLY, I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO WHEN I SEE THEM. BUT I *AM* GOING TO SEE THEM.
IS THIS GOING TO BE A FRIENDLY VISIT?
NO.
THEN I'M COMING WITH YOU.
ME, TOO.
GABBY. I NEED YOU TO STAY HERE WITH JONATHAN.
OH. OKAY.
GABBY.
YEAH?
FOUR HUNDRED AND THIRTY SEVEN THOUSAND, SIX HUNDRED AND THREE...AND TWO-FIFTHS.

NEW ATTILAN. HOME TO THE INHUMANS.

WITH THE DAUGHTERS OF THE TWO MEN I LOVED BY MY SIDE, I WENT TO CONFRONT THE MAN RESPONSIBLE FOR MY HUSBAND'S DEATH...

...WHO HAD APPARENTLY MOVED FROM THE MOON TO THE HUDSON RIVER. AS YOU DO.

IT'S OKAY, LAURA.

THEY HAVE POWERFUL PSYCHIC DEFENSES, BUT NOT POWERFUL ENOUGH TO COUNTER US.

THE INHUMANS CAN'T SEE US.

HE ISN'T IN THE THRONE ROOM. IT'S LIKE HE ISN'T WELCOME HERE...

WAIT.

CAN YOU FEEL THAT?

YES. SOMETHING CAN SENSE US.

THERE'S NO ONE NEARBY.

SNIKT

SNIKT

WOOOOF!

TOUCHÉ

SHRRRNK

RACHEL! WAIT!

STOP!

BOOOOOM

I'M NOT CONNECTED TO THE PHOENIX ANYMORE.

WHICH MEANS I CAN USE EVERYTHING I HAVE WITHOUT FEAR OF THE PHOENIX TAKING HOLD.

I DON'T FULLY KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS YET. BUT ONE THING I DO KNOW NOW...

...THE ALL-POWERFUL COSMIC ENTITY WAS HOLDING ME BACK.

WHO'S THERE? WHO SENSED US?

WHO SPEAKS FOR BLACK BOLT?

I DO.

I DIDN'T WANT ANY VIOLENCE HERE TODAY.

YOU ARE NOT HERE TO KILL BLACK BOLT FOR HIS PART IN THE DEATH OF SCOTT SUMMERS?

NO.

I AM HERE FOR SOMETHING ELSE.

BUT THIS WAS CARELESS.

WE'RE WORKING TO CHANGE PERCEPTION. WE WANT A WORLD THAT DOESN'T HATE AND FEAR US.

THAT WOULD BE EASIER IF WE DIDN'T GET INTO A SUPER-POWERED FIGHT IN AN OMINOUS CASTLE IN FRONT OF THE STATUE OF LIBERTY.

YOU'RE A TELEPATH. CAN YOU FEEL MY INTENT?

YES.

I'M NOT GOING TO HURT HIM.

PART OF YOU WANTS TO HURT HIM.

AM I GOING TO?

NO.

BLACK BOLT.

COME WITH ME, PLEASE.

IT'S OKAY. YOU CAN COMMUNICATE. I CAN HEAR YOU.

WHAT IS THIS?

THIS IS MY MIND.

IT'S... FRACTURED.

NO. IT'S JUST BUSY.

IT'S NOT ONLY HERE. I'M ALSO IN THE MIND OF A SMALL MUTANT CHILD AT THE XAVIER INSTITUTE.

I'M BORROWING HER MIND, PASSIVELY, TO WATCH OVER MY FRIENDS.

I'M IN AN ANIMAL IN LAURA'S APARTMENT. WATCHING HER SISTER.

MAKING SURE SHE DOESN'T FOLLOW US.

I'M IN THE MIND OF A YOUNG MAN CALLED CHAD. HE'S ARGUED WITH HIS PARENTS.

I'M MAKING SURE HE DOESN'T HURT HIMSELF OR ANYONE ELSE. I THINK HE'S GOING TO BE FINE, THOUGH.

WHY ARE YOU WATCHING THEM?

BECAUSE I WANT TO PROTECT THEM. ALL OF THEM. AND MUCH MORE THAN THAT.

YOU'RE A RULER. I KNOW YOU UNDERSTAND.

I HAVE SOME UNDERSTANDING OF THE FIGHT BETWEEN YOUR PEOPLE AND MINE. I KNOW THE MISTS YOU UNLEASHED THAT KILLED SCOTT...

THEY WERE A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT.

I THOUGHT ABOUT SHARING MY PAIN AND MY LOSS WITH YOU. LETTING YOU FEEL IT ALL.

BUT THAT DOESN'T HELP EITHER OF US.

WE'RE GOING TO NEED TO RELY ON EACH OTHER. THAT STARTS HERE.

WHAT DO YOU NEED FROM ME?

I NEED YOU TO SPEAK, BLACK BOLT.

I CAN'T SPEAK.

YOU CAN. USE MY VOICE. SAY IT.

I'M SORRY.

IT WAS ALL I COULD ASK FOR. IT WAS A BEGINNING...

LATER.

I'M ALIVE AGAIN.

BUT I NEED YOU TO UNDERSTAND, I'M NOT CONTENT TO RETURN TO THE *SAME* LIFE.

SCOTT SUMMERS
CYCLOPS
TEACHER-WARRIOR-HERO
MUTANT

I REFUSE TO ACCEPT THIS WORLD FOR HOW IT IS.

I'M GOING TO CHANGE IT.

"I WISH YOU WERE HERE TO CHANGE IT WITH ME, SCOTT."

X-MEN RED #5

EPILOGUE.

BIG DAY?

YOU COULD SAY THAT, KITTY.

IT FEELS LIKE...LIKE EVERYTHING COULD GET A LITTLE BETTER.

YEAH. THAT'S JEAN.

G'NIGHT, RACHEL.

HELLO?

IS SOMEONE THERE?

NO.

THERE'S NO ONE HERE.

YOU ARE STRONG, RACHEL GREY.

BUT YOU ARE NOT YOUR MOTHER. NOT YET.

YOU ARE NO THREAT TO ME.

HOWEVER, WHEN THE TIME IS RIGHT...

...YOU WILL BE AN IMPRESSIVE WEAPON TO WIELD AGAINST HER.

CONTINUED IN X-MEN RED!

ZONE